

## Key Word Strategy

This group strategy helps students see content vocabulary words in relationship to a broader category and to examine particular characteristics of the concept.

### Teacher Preparation:

1. Prepare a list of the content vocabulary to be examined.
2. Prepare an overhead transparency of the Key Word Strategy graphic organizer (5-7-2).

### Lesson Plan:

For each word:

1. Announce the “Bigger Idea” – the category into which the vocabulary word fits. Do not announce the vocabulary word. It is the “Key Word” students will try to discover. Fill in the “Essential Characteristics.”
2. Students call out examples of the bigger idea. If the word is an example of the key word, write it in the “Examples” column on the transparency. If not, write it in the “Non-examples” column. If the suggestions stall, provide either an example or a non-example.
3. Students guess what the Key Word is until someone gets it right.

Alternate exercise:

1. Announce the “Bigger Idea” and the Key Word.
2. Provide examples and non-examples, one at a time, and lead discussions about why each is/is not an example of the key word.
3. When students have a grasp of the meaning of the key word, work together on the “Essential Characteristics.”

Example:

- Bigger Idea: Transportation
- Essential Characteristics: two wheels, a seat, pedals, a chain system, energy supplied by the rider
- Non-examples: motorcycle, moped, scooter
- Examples: mountain bike, 10-speed bike, dirt bike
- Key Word: bicycle

This strategy was adapted from *Word Works Cracking Vocabulary's Code* presented by Daniel Moirao Ed. D at Fuquay Varina High School, March 6, 2008.